

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Praise God for His Wisdom and Revelation!
Ephesians 1:8-10

Keywords: Praise, Thankfulness, Wisdom, , Blessings, End Times, Heaven

PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb:

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week I sought to direct our minds to begin to grasp the greatness and vastness of our redemption.
 - 1. Requires us to understand how helpless we are without God's intervention.
 - 2. He is not merely filling up what is lacking in our live but rather utterly redeeming us from under the wrath of God.
 - 3. Remember that redemption is more than forgiveness of sins but rather it is the bringing us out of sin and death and into righteousness and life. It is more than life-changing, it is realm or reality shifting.
 - 4. All of this determined before creation even and all of it designed to bring God maximum glory in all things.
- B. What our section of Ephesians does if read and understood rightly is to remove any sense of self-determination and pride from us and instead move all our hope and praise to God.
- C. This in turn is to transform us as we learn to understand what God our Father has given us in Jesus Christ.
- D. All of this is because of what is at the end of vs 7, "the riches of His grace."
- E. Today we will consider two more reasons why we are to be a people who are quick to praise God.

II. We praise God for Wisdom.

- A. Remind that this is one whole sentence, challenge to translate into English, punctuation choices matter.
 - 1. In most of your translations in vs 8 you have "which he lavished upon us" Then either a comma or a period. Then the next prepositional phrase which is connected to vs 9.

We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2. Not the best choice for it is rightly connected back to 'grace' in vs 7.
- B. Paul says that we have this redemption in accordance to God grace.
- C. Then he says that this grace is something he lavished upon us.
 1. That term is so rich. It speaks to having an overabundance or superabundance of something. Grace here.
 2. In other words, God poured out His grace upon us in our desperate situation in an unending, unsparing manner.
 3. The challenge is that we simply don't possess sufficient terms to speak of the fulness and richness in how our Creator poured and continues to pour out grace upon us.
 4. Picture out on a ship or helicopter going for hours out deeper into the ocean and then jumping in. Picture the sense of vastness of your situation. Now make that but a thimble full of the ocean of the God's grace toward you.
 5. And again I say that thankless Christians are a contradiction to the reality that they possess.
- D. Now we come back to that phrase in vs 8 "in all wisdom and insight." What is meant by this?
 1. As you can see it is commonly understood to connect to either the way God lavished His grace (back to vs 7) or the way God made known to us His mystery (forward to vs 9). In other words, it is emphasizing that God did what He did in wisdom and insight.
 2. But there is another way to understand this that is better.
 - a. First understand it is best to connect the phrase back to "grace."
 - b. But second, understand that the wisdom and insight are what God has given to us. They are gifts God gives to us as His children.
 3. So not only has God chosen us, predestined us to adoption, redeemed and forgiven us. He has also given us wisdom and insight.
 - a. But not just some, but "all" which simply takes this up another notch.
 - b. This "all" functions extensively rather than intensity. Mean "all sorts of". Not saying we have bit of wisdom one could have but that we now possess every sort of God's wisdom. It is not available to us and present to and in us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- c. Note well the piling on of terms to describe the richness of God's grace toward sinners.
4. The terms should be understood together. They are so very close in meaning with slight shades of differences in various contexts in the bible.
 - a. Wisdom is skillful living out of the Bible.
 - b. Understanding will be that ability to discern between ways and choices. To "read" life properly.
5. When Paul uses wisdom though it is tightly connected to Jesus Christ.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:17-2:13 has fifteen of the twenty-eight times Paul uses this term of "wisdom." Let me make some quick observations that then point us back here to Ephesians.
 - b. God's sovereign plan is such that it is designed to render hopeless and powerless any wisdom that is borne of man (1:19-20).
 - c. The gospel, the substitutionary death of Jesus, is counter to this world's wisdom (23, 25).
 - d. Part of God's sovereign choice of us is that we are not the "wise" and powerful. God uses us because we are weak so that His wisdom is clearly seen, even though it is seen as foolishness (27).
 - e. Wisdom is ultimately defined in Jesus Christ and without Jesus there can be no true wisdom (30).
 - f. Our only message to this world is one that is foolish to them. Why? So that as it works its saving work on the elect it manifests God power rather than man (2:4-5).
 - g. This wisdom is contrary to this age and the powers of this age (6).
 - h. This wisdom is a mystery, unknown apart from God's revelation of it (7). And the context of this passage shows that the clause, "we speak" is referring to preaching Christ; therefore, this means that the wisdom of God is the crucified and raised Christ (7).
 - i. A key ministry of the Holy Spirit is to reveal this mystery that is the wisdom of God (10).
6. So God's grace, His lavish grace, is ours and it supplies to each of us the wisdom and insight that is needed to live out our lives on this side of eternity.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- E. All of us are interpreters of life and it is only when we are redeemed from sin that we receive that gift of wisdom and insight that then begins to help us see rightly.
- F. And it is for this great benefit given out of the fullness of God's grace that we ought to be ever giving thanks.
- G. But there is more that our Father has revealed to us, we learn His will and plan for eternity.

III. We praise God for His Revelation (9-10).

- A. Now we move to this unique unveiling of what Paul describes as the "mystery of His will."
 - 1. Explain the pronouns.
 - 2. Note that it is a done deal, it has already happened. So it is not something we need to seek, nor is it something that is still hidden. Rather it is revealed.
- B. The "revealing" is a term that speaks of making something known.
 - 1. The bible uses it about God making his will known (Psalm 16:11).
 - 2. Making known something that was secret (Daniel 2:5).
 - 3. God making his power known (Luke 2:15).
 - 4. Again making his will known (John 15:15).
 - 5. But most important is that God made known the mysteries that have been kept secret until now (Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3, 5, 10; 6:19; Colossians 1:27).
- C. What is revealed to us is what he calls a "mystery."
 - 1. Simply put it is something that simply was not knowable in the past. It is part of God's plan and will that He chose not to reveal in the past.
 - a. You see this in Romans 16:25-26 but also here in 3:9.
 - b. If you look up to Ephesians 2:4-5 you realize how then it was revealed. Here is one of the works of the Holy Spirit and here is one huge reason to be a man or woman of the bible, for it is there that we see that will revealed by the apostles.
 - 2. In 1 Corinthians 2:7 it is connected to the wisdom of God which is Jesus Christ crucified.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

3. In Ephesians 2:11-3:13 it is developed even more that on the foundation of the crucified Christ that both Jew and Gentile are united into one as the body of Jesus Christ.
- D. What was the attitude driving this?
1. We see the answer in the prepositional phrase, "according to his kind intention." Or you could translate it as "good pleasure."
 2. Sadly ESV leaves this out.
 3. Here we see two things at least:
 - a. First, God is not unemotional. It speaks of a strong emotion to do a favor for another. He smiled when He determined this to be part of His plan.
 - b. Second, God is again shown to be the soul basis for all of what we see and experience. It is a strong statement of God being sovereign. He was not moved to reveal this mystery because of anything He saw in us. It pleased Him to do so and that is all.
- E. Where is this revealing done?
1. "Which He purposed in Him.
 2. God ordained by His pleasure to unveil this mystery in Jesus Christ.
 3. So the plan of God is much greater than merely redeeming sinners out of enslavement. It is more than predestining us to adoption as sons and daughters. It is more than being chosen before time to be in Jesus Christ.
 4. What we have is that Jesus Christ was the basis of the mystery, He was hidden in many key ways in the Old Testament. And He is the revelation of God's sovereign plan.
 5. Our Lord would be that sacrifice that resolved God's wrath. Our Lord would defeat the heavenly powers and authorities. Our Lord would ultimately gather up all of the universe and bring everything into culmination in Himself.
 6. And that is what we see in vs 10.
- F. "With a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ."
1. What is going on here? Really sounds boring to me and that is a shame because it is anything but that.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

2. There are various ways to render the phrase that I won't take the time to explain. The best way to render this out is something like "God purposed in (at the time of) the administration of the fullness of the time to unite under one head all things." (Hoehner, 217)
 3. Here we have the answer to the question that should naturally come in your minds, "What has God purposed in Jesus?"
 4. And the answer is that in Jesus it is to gather and unite up all things in Christ.
 5. The next question is when does this happen? At the time of the administration of the fullness of time.
 6. Now there is a lot in all of this so let me try to unpack it in such a way that you can begin get as excited as you ought to.
- G. Administration here refers to the activity of administrating or putting into effect an order or plan, hence ESV's word choice.
1. God has a plan. God has His sovereign will that is His alone.
 2. And this plan involved the wonderful news that in Christ all things would be united.
 3. And it happens in what is known as "the fullness of the times."
 - a. Notice that it is in the plural.
 - b. In Galatians 4:4 a very similar statement is "when the fullness of time came God sent forth His Son." There it is singular, pointing to a specific time or event.
 - c. In our passage it is the time when all "times" are brought together and filled up. Think of these as the great epochs or ages of human history. But also the epochs of that other side of reality, within the spiritual domains as well.
 - d. All of history rushing toward a settled end in Jesus.
- H. Bringing this all together:
1. In Luke 21:24 it is written, "They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."
 2. We are still in that "time" and that time will continue until Jesus returns.

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

3. Over and over in the Old Testament we are told that there is coming a time when the Lord and Messiah/Christ will rule on earth.
 - a. Zechariah is a wonderful example of those many passages.
 - b. In chapter 12 it is written that YHWH come and fight for Israel. He will be their defender. He will convert their hearts that they would repent and believe in the Messiah.
 - c. In Chapter 13 God gives them forgiveness of sin and destroys their false religions.
 - d. Then in chapter 14 the Lord, YHWH, will fight for Israel and He will be king over Israel.
 - (1) And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. 12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. 13 It will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. 14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance. 15 So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps. 16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. 18 If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them;

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 19 This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 20 In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. (Zec 14:9-20)

- (2) Some try to move this event into the eternal state after sin and death is gone, but this passage clearly shows that sin is still present.
 - (3) This event of the coming of the Messiah is spoken over and over in the Gospels.
 - (4) In the first chapter of Acts the apostles desire to know if it is now time for the kingdom of God to come and are told instead to be witnesses of Jesus Christ for that is not for them to know.
 - (5) This reign begins at the end of this age, where Revelation 20 clearly says that Jesus reigns in Jerusalem for 1000 years. Then, at the end he vanquishes all of our true enemies are done away and behold, God makes all things new.
4. This "summing up" is also translated "unite" or "head up".
- a. It speaks of the transition from the old to the new.
 - b. Colossians 1:20.
 - (1) Presupposes that the universe both seen and unseen is broken and needs to be reconciled.
 - (2) Notice that it is the Father reconciling everything. But how? "Through Him, meaning Jesus Christ.
 - c. This is what our passage is saying. God will bring all things together and everything that is broken will be restored. All things in captivity will be freed. All things dead will be alive.
 - d. It is nothing less than the glorious removal of sin.
 - e. And it is "in Christ" that this occurs.

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- f. So if we are "in Christ" we will be part of this incomprehensibly infinitely soul-bending act.
- I. When does this all happen? In two stages.
 - 1. The initial stage occurred in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus. We see this in 1:7; 20-21; 2:6 -7, 16.
 - 2. But the ultimate stage is at the end and you can read about it in Revelation 19-20.

IV. Conclusion.

- A. So yet again we come to the end of our time and there is only one thing we can appropriately be.
- B. We are to be a people who praise and thank God.
- C. We thank God for lavishing wisdom and insight upon us.
- D. We thank God that he placed us in Christ and therefore we shall one day strip away every vestige of the effects of sin. And oh what a day that shall be where we are truly free.
- E. Is it not only proper then for us to close out this time singing with an eye toward that day.